

Pittsburgh December 11th 1849

Dear Cousin Margaret

Yours of 29th directed to me at wheeling found me at this place where we have been since last February. and you would have received a letter from me since our arrival here but your last letter giving the St^o and Street of your residence has in our removals been mislaid I had put it with some other letters for the purpose of writing again to you on my arrival at this place. But as I could not find it I still hoped to have a line from you often have I determined to write and as often put it off saying Surely Margaret will write in the summer I presumed you was out of the City and then when you returned you would write. I had many fears on account of the Cholera. but to us God has continued his great Kindness. Oh let us praise and magnify his blessed name. only across a narrow river in an adjoining town it made fearful ravages. our Smoky City has so far been among the favored spots and is looked upon as secure from Cholera in a violent form. but your letter alarmed me on seeing the Seal and the Mind quickly ran over among you all who had departed hence I knew you was the writer but Richard. the Children your brothers your counts. Alas your father was only

brought to remembrance by your naming him as I did not by some strange and sudden forgetfulness have aught of thought concerning him. how often do we find it thus the thing we fear happens not but that we feared not - the thing we hoped for never occurred but that we hoped never to realize came fully to our knowledge we experienced its very bitterness but if God be for us we have realized that

The bread may have a bitter taste

But Sweet will be the flowers. and we feel that Faith lends its realizing light

The Clouds disperse the shadows fly

The invisible appears in sight

And God is seen by Mortal Eye

Cousin though it is natural to look around for help in the day of adversity and we are ready to say Ah! my friends will surely comfort me in this my bereaved condition yet Oh! how vain is the help of man. The Lord gave and the Lord taketh away. to him we could say if thou hadst been here my brother had not died. He is the resurrection and the life and whosoever believeth in Him shall never die. there is another life but Oh! soul saddening, sickening, killing thought, men live to murder the life to come, to kill time, they plunge a dagger into eternal life and leave for themselves only eternal death, when earthly life is terminated how Sweet in our earthly bereavements to have a good hope that our friends have not died but have fallen asleep in Jesus

you mention that your father had a fall and dislocated his shoulder. If I mistake not his father was thrown in some way perhaps out of a Gig & broke his Collar bone. but this is a coincidence that concerns us less than the suddenness in which death has entered our families. you I presume know how swift and unheeded has been his work - from full life my father left us. his mother died in the act of taking a drink of water and your grandfather was suddenly taken away. I earnestly pray that God in his mercy may fully prepare the living for their change and lead each to Engage who next shall be summoned away. My Merciful God is it I. During the early part of the summer my wife & myself intended to accompany my brother-in-law in his accustomed semi annual visit to the Eastern Cities he to purchase goods we to see Cousin Margaret but many things occurred to let us once more have hope deferred. we are again keeping house our family consisting of my brother-in-law his little son (my name sake) our kind girl my wife and your warm Cousin my health is better but I am in no business at present yet I am I trust in some sense grateful that my health is not utterly broken. my general health is good but at times I suffer from severe Cough and my throat troubles me. the Croup is not the most cruel disease so far as my experience goes but it is a determined one and is not willing to give up. I shall direct this to you to the care of your Mother & hope soon to get an answer. I have written the first opportunity since

the receipt of yours for although I am in no business for
myself yet on the return of favorable symptoms I became
so uneasy for want of Employment that I eagerly embraced
a wish of a friend that I would take part in writing up
his books which I have continued until another friend
called on me and urged me to assist him so that
I have perhaps done as much at least as is consistent with
my situation - in getting out of business at Whaling I left
all my means in the establishment I left & will not realize
anything for one year yet, and at present I feel too poor to
think of talking any about visiting you. But it would
give us all great pleasure to receive a visit. Cannot
you all come in the Spring if spared. tell Richard that
this is a country that is destined to be the best part
of the United States. We sincerely sympathize in the deep
afflictions you all have met and passed through but
"Earth has no sorrow heaven cannot cure" Say to Cousin
Susan I am in hope of getting that letter so long promised
but shall wish her fully recovered before she writes.
but if you know how often my wife and myself have
said why does not Margaret write and how much we value
your letters you would not let so much time intervene but
say I will write. we remember you at a throne of grace
and derive an interest in your petitions. May you realize
the desire of your heart in speedily beholding the heart of
your dear Richard turned to the Lord and to this end
cease not to plead Jesus has promised that whatsoever you ask
the father in his name shall be done. try his faithfulness. wait
on the Lord so shall he give you the desire of your heart.
My wife joins in love to all. especially do we both unite in our
best wishes to yourself
as ever your Cousin
John L. Sands